**Significant Accomplishments and Contributions**

**Request for Approval Form**

**Name: Bridget Cooper/Dawn Stark/Christine Kelly**

**School: Sexton H.S./Everett H.S./Gardner M.S.**

**Date Submitted: 01/28/15 (2nd submission with more information)**

**Title of significant accomplishment and/or contribution:** Japanese Program Extra-curricular Advisor

**Description significant accomplishment and/or contribution:**

Teachers work unpaid hours outside of the regular school day to provide meaningful educational opportunities for our students.

Depending on the year, these activities may include:

* coordinating the Lansing-Otsu Middle School Exchange Program (LSD student's visit to Japan), considered one of our district’s most outstanding programs for over twenty years.
* arranging the Japanese students’ homestay visit to the Lansing School District.
* planning field trips to special Japanese events, such as art exhibits and quiz bowls.
* writing grants for additional salary support for Japanese teachers, Japanese teaching materials, admission and transportation assistance to attend special events.
* fundraising and promoting relationships with local entities (such as our facilitation of the Japanese portion of the 20th Anniversary of Sister-Cities Celebration this past September, 2014).
* networking and establishing ties with government representatives, university faculty, and others concerned with maintaining our relationship on both the city and state level.

**Rationale for inclusion of significant accomplishment and/or contribution:**

**How our significant contributions benefit the school/school district:**

* We retain the best and brightest students in our district by providing real world educational opportunities.
* We offer activities and programs that are not found in surrounding districts (not just the classes themselves, but what we do outside of the school day to create interest for our program).
* We increase parental involvement in educational activities.
* We invest time in acquiring and maintaining grants, to lessen the burden of our salaries on the overall school district.
* We get broad community-based support for our activities.
* We connect with other educational (locally with Lansing Community College and Michigan State University) and governmental agencies to gain support.

**How our significant contributions benefit the students:**

* The Lansing-Otsu Exchange Program that we supervise gives students the opportunity to use their knowledge of Japanese language and customs in a hands-on way, by visiting Japan and doing a homestay.
* This Lansing-Otsu Exchange Program also gives students the chance to use their knowledge of Japan right here in Lansing, by either hosting a Japanese exchange student, or interacting with the Japanese students when they visit their school.
* This Lansing-Otsu Exchange Program helps develop our students as global citizens, and encourages them to expand their horizons and become more open-minded.
* The special field trips and extra-curricular activities that we plan and supervise, such as trips to see a Japanese exhibit at the Detroit Institute of Arts, and participation in the Michigan Japan Bowl, provide students with enriching experiences that cannot be found within the classroom walls. These trips often take place beyond the regular school day, and sometimes on weekends.
* Some of the grants that we write and attain, such as from the DIA for transportation and admission, reduce the financial burden for students and their families participating on these programs.
* Other grants that we write and attain, such as Japan Foundation Grants for all three Japanese teachers, provide money to purchase up-to-date materials and texts that help increase student motivation to tackle Japanese, considered one of the world’s most difficult languages. These grants also help pay the salaries for the Japanese teachers, so that we can offer high quality Japanese instruction to our students, even when our district faces budget constraints.
* The fundraising activities that we lead, such as fundraising at the Lansing Sister Cities 20th Anniversary Celebration Event last fall 2014, lessen the financial burden to students and their families participating on these special programs.
* The Lansing-Otsu Exchange Program, as well as other programs we supervise, increase parental involvement in educational activities, leading to greater student achievement overall.
* Our conscious effort to develop close ties with faculty at Michigan State University and Lansing Community College through the Intern Program at MSU, joint activities (such as the annual MSU Japanese Teachers Workshop and the MSU Doll Exhibit) and classroom visits (LCC’s Professor Marc Thomas and his Japanese students) help create a link for our students to the world beyond high school. Students are able to see a real purpose to their high school education, make valuable connections, and find out about overseas opportunities in upper education.

**Please submit form to Mark Coscarella at** [**mark.coscarella@lansingschools.net**](mailto:mark.coscarella@lansingschools.net)